

RECIPES TO TRY - FLEXIBLE DINNER MEALS

By Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Lower carb, protein-rich recipes to inspire some tasty, health-promoting, home-cooked meals!

It's dinnertime and everyone is looking at YOU to create a meal. Sound familiar? However, if you are trying to follow a lower carb plan, it may seem daunting to make a meal that can work for all. Here is your solution!! Use these recipes to inspire you. Variations of meals are shown in the hope that you can make ONE basic meal for all, plus "extras". And you can always swap out ingredients or side dishes based on preference or what you have on hand.

- ❖ Meals are listed to be reduced in total carbs; add starchy side items as needed to round out meals for family members and/or yourself, depending on your daily carb allowance.
- ❖ Recipes purposefully include a variety of foods/ingredients that promote health, while providing many of the flavors that we typically crave.
- ❖ As you try new recipes you may discover new foods or cooking techniques that you hadn't tried before. Keep an open mind! Allow yourself to be pleasantly surprised!
- ❖ Try planning out a few dinner meals (use the "Meal Planning Template" to jot them down) so you will have the ingredients on hand. Having a dinner plan in place provides a solid structure to your day, and other meals can flow from there.

CREAMY TUSCAN GARLIC CHICKEN

Recipe by Alyssa Rivers @www.therecipecritic.com. Link to original recipe [here](#).

Recipe adapted by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Makes: 4 servings

Per Serving: 709 calories, 73 g protein, 8 g carb (1 g fiber), 41 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 20 ounces chicken breasts, organic preferred • 2 Tbsp olive oil • 1 cup heavy cream, organic preferred • 1/2 cup bone broth, chicken flavored • 1 tsp garlic powder • 1 tsp Italian seasoning, organic preferred • 1/2 cup parmesan cheese • 3 cups spinach, chopped • 1/2 cup sun-dried tomatoes, dry packed • Sea salt and pepper, to taste 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Season the chicken on both sides with salt and pepper. 2. Add olive oil to a large skillet and heat to medium-high. Add chicken, and cook 3-5 minutes on each side, until browned on the outside, and no longer pink on the inside. Remove chicken and set aside on a plate. 3. Add the heavy cream, chicken broth, garlic powder, Italian seasoning, and parmesan cheese. Whisk over medium-high heat until it starts to thicken. Add the spinach and sundried tomatoes, and allow to simmer (medium low heat) until the spinach begins to wilt. Add the chicken back to the pan and allow flavors to meld (several minutes). 4. To plate: Divide chicken and sauce into 4 portions. See below for serving suggestions.
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Julie's Note: This meal is a bit higher in calories and can be richly satisfying without adding a lot to it.

LOW CARB

Simply **steam some broccoli** (or your favorite non-starchy veggie) to go with it. You can use the broccoli to clean up the sauce off your plate!

MORE CARB

Try pairing it up with **pasta or potatoes**. Visit the [author's website](#) to see more serving suggestions.

BAKED SALMON

Recipe adapted from Beachbody Ultimate Reset Program.

Makes 1 serving

Adjust ingredients based on the number of servings needed.



Per Serving: 404 calories, 44 g protein, 3 g carb (0.3 g fiber), 23 g fat

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 1 clove garlic ● 2 tsp extra virgin olive oil ● 1 Tbsp chopped fresh basil ● 1/4 tsp sea salt ● 1/2 tsp herbal seasoning blend ● 1 Tbsp fresh lemon juice ● 1 Tbsp chopped fresh parsley ● 1 (6-oz) salmon filet, wild caught preferred* 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. 2. Combine garlic, oil, basil, salt, seasoning blend, lemon juice and parsley in a small bowl; mix well. 3. Place salmon in a shallow baking dish; pour marinade over salmon. Marinate for 20 minutes (or more), turning once to get marinade on both sides. If your salmon has skin on it, turn it so the skin is facing up while marinating but skin-side down while cooking. 4. Cover with aluminum foil and bake for 20 minutes, or until salmon flakes easily with a fork.
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**Alaskan wild-caught salmon is the best option if you can find it. It has the least amount of toxins and an abundance of omega-3 fats.*

RICED CAULIFLOWER MEDLEY

Recipe adapted from www.delscookingtwist.com. Link to original recipe [here](#).

Makes 3 servings



Per Serving: 88 calories, 4 g protein, 9 g carb (3 g fiber), 5 g fat

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 8 oz bag riced cauliflower ● 1 tablespoon olive oil ● 2 scallions, thinly sliced ● 1 cup green peas (fresh, canned or frozen) ● zest of 1 lemon ● 1 tablespoon lemon juice ● salt and pepper, to taste 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To a microwave-safe bowl, add the frozen riced cauliflower. Cover with a lid and cook for 4-5 minutes (reduce cooking time if not frozen at the start). With a paper towel, press out any excess moisture. 2. Heat olive oil in a large skillet placed over medium heat. Once hot, add the riced cauliflower, scallions and green peas. Sauté 5-7 minutes, stirring often. 3. Season with salt and pepper, add lemon zest and a squeeze of lemon juice. Stir to disperse ingredients, then divide into 2 large or 3 medium portions. For this meal, serve salmon on top or along the side.
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If you prefer to take a short-cut, you can buy the Green Giant version pictured (left) and simply follow steps 2-3 above.

<p>Julie's Note: <i>This recipe above will help you try riced cauliflower in a way that amplifies it with other flavors/ingredients.</i></p>	
LOW CARB	<p>Peas are a little higher in carbs, but pairing them with the cauliflower will reduce the total amount of carbs - so this is still a low-carb side dish.</p>
MORE CARB	<p>Use regular rice in place of the riced cauliflower. Another option is to replace half of the riced cauliflower with rice; others may accept the riced cauliflower in this blended form.</p>

STEAK (MOCHA-RUBBED)

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Serves 1

Adjust recipe to the number of servings needed.

Per Serving: 500 calories, 52 g protein, 0 g carbs, 33 g fat




<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 6-ounce steak, tenderloin or filet mignon (Ribeye is fine too, it just has more fat; use an 8-ounce portion) 1-2 Tbsp butter, organic preferred Mocha Rub (optional) Sea salt and freshly ground pepper 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Prepare steak by adding 1/2-1 Tbsp rub to each side. If not using mocha rub, season with salt and pepper. Heat an oven-safe skillet to medium high and add 1 Tbsp butter. Add steak to skillet and sear on the first side 1-2 minutes, then flip and sear on the other side 1 minute. Turn off heat, add lid and finish cooking in the oven. The amount of time needed depends on how rare you like your steak as well as how thick it is. For a medium thick steak, 5-7 minutes is about right. Once it is done to your liking, allow it to sit on the stovetop, still in the pan with the lid, for about 5 minutes. Alternatively, grill steak on an outdoor grill to your liking. Place steak on a plate and top with an additional 1/2 Tbsp fresh butter.
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MOCHA RUB

Recipe from "It Starts With Food", by Dallas and Melissa Hartwig, page 279

Amount listed below has been tripled from the original recipe. This makes enough rub for 10-12 steaks.

	<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 3 Tbsp black pepper 3 Tbsp coriander 2 Tbsp sea salt 1 1/2 tsp ground cloves 3 tsp ground cinnamon 2 tsp unsweetened cocoa 2 Tbsp ground coffee (this is the amount in one Keurig sized pod of coffee) 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Crush all ingredients in a spice grinder or with a mortar and pestle. Place in a storage container. <u>Note from Julie:</u> I usually just put all ingredients directly into my small storage container, put the lid on, and shake it up. A small mason jar is perfect! Use a spoon to sprinkle some of the rub onto your steaks. Massage the rub into the steaks, wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and allow to rest ~30 minutes before cooking.
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ROASTED ASPARAGUS

Makes 2 servings

Per Serving: 86 calories, 3 g protein, 5 g carb (2 g fiber), 7 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> asparagus, 16 spears 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil sea salt 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. Rinse asparagus and snap off tough ends, then arrange in a baking dish in a single layer. Drizzle with olive oil and add sea salt to taste. Bake for 15-20 minutes, checking on it to be sure it doesn't overcook. Arrange on a dinner plate (8 spears is one serving).
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Julie's Note: For those with bigger appetites, there is no harm in having a larger portion of steak than is listed here, particularly in the context of a very low carb plan.

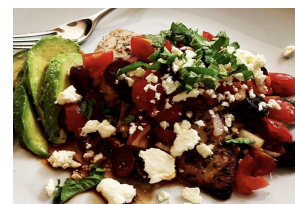
LOW CARB	For this meal, the side item is asparagus , which is low in carbs + healthy fat (olive oil). If you prefer a higher fat steak (like a ribeye), be sure to keep the side item low in carbs. Asparagus is also particularly good for your gut bacteria.
MORE CARB	If you choose a loaded potato as your side, keep the steak smaller and leaner (sirloin or filet).

BRUSCHETTA CHICKEN

By Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Makes 2 servings

Per Serving: 597 calories, 50 g protein, 10 g carbs (3 g fiber), 40 g fat



Ingredients:	Directions:
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (2) 5-6 oz chicken breasts, organic preferred ● 60 g avocado (1/2 small), sliced ● 2 roma tomatoes or 8 grape tomatoes, diced ● 2 Tbsp red onion, minced ● 2 cloves garlic, minced ● 8 black olives, diced ● 2 leaves basil, sliced ● 3 Tbsp olive oil, divided ● 3-4 tsp balsamic vinegar ● 4 Tbsp feta cheese, crumbled ● sea salt and pepper to taste 	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. Prepare chicken by patting dry and seasoning both sides with salt and pepper. 2. Heat an oven-safe skillet to medium-high and add 1 Tbsp olive oil. Cook chicken on each side 1-2 minutes to sear. Add lid, turn off heat, and place in oven for 8-10 minutes. 3. Meanwhile, prepare the bruschetta. To a medium bowl, add the tomatoes, red onions, garlic, and black olives. Add the other Tbsp oil plus balsamic vinegar, toss, then set aside. Note: I make the bruschetta by dividing each ingredient into small bowls as I go to help with portion control and proper distribution of ingredients. 4. Remove chicken from the oven (check to see that it is cooked through and no longer pink), then add to dinner plates. Top with bruschetta, then add avocado and feta cheese. Top with basil. Add salt and pepper to taste.

Julie's Note: This meal is "all in one" and no side dish is needed, especially if you like avocado.

LOW CARB

Prepare as above. If you don't love avocado (healthy fat), add a non-starchy veggie as a side or go heavier with the feta and bruschetta amount.

MORE CARB

Some crusty bread would be nice with this for a splurge.

A NOTE ABOUT AVOCADOS

(This info is also on the "Healthy and Unhealthy Fats" PDF but listed here for quick access).



Avocados are all the rage these days due to their healthy fat and fiber content, plus having minerals like potassium and magnesium (which help balance out sodium to improve your blood pressure). But you may wonder how to buy and use them. Check out the tips below so you can begin using them as part of your healthy plan.

Avocado Info and Tips:

- ❖ Hass avocados are the most popular type; you can buy them as singles or grouped in a bag.
- ❖ "Mini" or "**tiny avocados**" are also available; these are handy for smaller portions.
- ❖ You might buy them when they are green and firm to the touch; simply allow to ripen on the counter, then store in the fridge until ready to eat.
- ❖ You will know it is ripe when the outer skin turns from green to a darker gray/brown color and softer to the touch; however, it should not be mushy. Picture above illustrates the color you are looking for.
- ❖ After being cut, it will turn brown (similar to a banana) after a short period of time. For this reason, only slice as much as you immediately plan to use.
- ❖ After cutting into it, you can store unused portions in the fridge in an airtight container. Just remove the brown edges next time when you use it.
- ❖ You can also cut unused avocado into wedges and store in the freezer. Add to smoothies later to make them rich and creamy.

MEXICAN COD SKILLET MEAL

By Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Makes 4 servings



Per serving: 392 calories, 47 g protein, 31 g carb (8 g fiber), 8 g fat, 23 g net carbs

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● (4) 6-oz portions of cod or other white fish, thawed* ● 1 can black beans, drained ● 1 medium-sized jar of salsa (mild or medium) ● 8-oz bag plain riced cauliflower ● 1 large avocado, diced ● sea salt and ground pepper ● Optional: chopped fresh cilantro, sour cream, lime juice 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heat a large skillet over medium. Add the drained black beans, jar of salsa and riced cauliflower (it's ok if it is still frozen). Stir to combine, then cover with a lid and cook for 10-15 minutes to heat and allow flavors to combine. 2. Meanwhile, pat fish dry and season with salt and pepper. Nestle each portion into the bean mixture, recover with the lid, and allow to cook another 8-10 minutes, until fish flakes easily with a fork and is no longer opaque (fish should be white). 3. Divide into 4 equal portions, either onto plates or shallow bowls. 4. Add avocado and optional ingredients to taste.
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*Swap the fish for chicken if you prefer. Shrimp is also good!

<p><i>Julie's Note:</i> This meal is easy to prepare - using ingredients you may already have on hand - particularly if you are using the "Grocery Template" on the Direct Access website.</p>	
<p>LOW CARB</p>	<p>Prepare as above. The beans will make this meal a little higher in carbs - but the net carb amount (31 grams carbs - 8 grams fiber) is 23 grams. This can work well as part of a "lower carb" diet. A bonus is that the fiber in the beans is food for the gut bacteria.</p>
<p>MORE CARB</p>	<p>Swap the riced cauliflower for white Basmati rice, which has a lower glycemic index. You can read more about the glycemic index of different forms of rice here. You might also want to cook the rice ahead of time and then allow it to cool; this allows it to develop resistant starch, which can help reduce the blood sugar impact of the rice. Alternatively, you could consider using a product like "Alchemy Fibre" to add to your rice.</p>

How do beans/legumes fit into a lower carb plan?

Due to the carbs in beans, you might think that you should completely avoid beans and other legumes on a lower-carb diet. However, beans/legumes are a great source of **soluble fiber**. This fiber will help to slow the absorption of sugar/carbs into the bloodstream. And it will also serve as food for the gut bacteria. Diets that include beans are usually associated with improved insulin sensitivity. While we may not want to add beans to every meal, including them as part of one meal per day can be a smart option. You might add them to a salad, into a soup or use as part of a one-dish meal, as in this recipe above.

Here is a Healthline article for additional reading: [9 Healthy Beans and Legumes You Should Try](#).

EGG DROP SOUP

Recipe taken from www.shewearsmanyhats.com. Link to recipe [here](#).

Serves: 4

Per Serving: 68 calories, 10 g protein, 2 g carb, 2 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 32 oz chicken broth (use leftover broth from boiled chicken, if available) • 1 tsp ground ginger • 1 tsp soy sauce or Bragg's Liquid Aminos • 2 eggs, beaten • 1/4 cup chopped green onions (about 2 total) • Salt and pepper to taste 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add chicken broth, ground ginger and Bragg's liquid aminos (or soy sauce) to a saucepan; bring to a simmer. 2. Slowly stream in beaten eggs while stirring the soup in one direction. 3. Add green onions. Add salt and pepper to taste.
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PORK EGG ROLL IN A BOWL

By Kyndra D. Holly @ www.peaceloveandlowcarb.com. Link to original recipe [here](#).

Makes: 3-4 servings

Per Serving (4): 475 calories, 35 g protein, 13 g carb (4 g fiber), 33 g fat

Per Serving (3): 633 calories, 47 g protein, 17 g carb (6 g fiber), 44 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 Tbsp sesame oil • 3 cloves garlic, minced • 1/2 cup onion, diced • 5 green onions, sliced on a bias (white & green parts) • 1 pound ground pork • 1/2 tsp ground ginger (or use fresh ginger, about 1 tsp thinly sliced and diced) • Sea salt and black pepper to taste • 1 Tbsp Sriracha or garlic chili sauce, or more to taste • 14 oz bag coleslaw mix (or replace with 4 cups chopped cabbage and 1 medium red bell pepper, thinly sliced) • 3 Tbsp Coconut Aminos or Bragg's Liquid Aminos • 1 Tbsp rice vinegar • 2 Tbsp toasted sesame seeds 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heat sesame oil in a large skillet over medium high heat. 2. Add the garlic, onion and white portion of the green onions. Saute until the onions are translucent and the garlic is fragrant. 3. Add the ground pork, ginger, sea salt and black pepper, and Sriracha. Saute until the pork is cooked through. 4. Add the coleslaw mix or cabbage and red bell pepper, coconut aminos (or Bragg's liquid aminos), and rice wine vinegar. Saute until the cabbage is tender. 5. Top with green onions and sesame seeds before serving.
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Julie's Note: These two recipes are popular among people following lower carb diets. They seem to provide all the flavors you are looking for without an abundance of blood sugar-spiking carbs. The Egg Drop Soup makes a good "starter", followed by Pork Egg Roll in a bowl, if you have time to prepare both! If you need to make a low- and high-carb version, divide into 2 portions before adding the coleslaw mix or the rice.

LOW CARB	Prepare as listed above.
MORE CARB	Replace the coleslaw mix with rice.

GRILLED CHICKEN

Recipe adapted from www.ambitiouskitchen.com by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD. [Video](#) and alternate recipe for how to marinate and grill chicken [here](#).



Serves: 4

Per Serving: 305 calories, 48 g protein, 2 g carb, 10 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 chicken breasts, 6 ounces each • Bragg's Italian Vinaigrette or other oil/vinegar marinade • Sea salt and pepper, to taste 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add chicken to a large shallow container and season each side with salt and pepper, then pour in enough vinaigrette to marinate all 4 breasts. Allow 2-4 hours to marinate, if possible. Store in the fridge and toss once or twice during this time to help distribute the marinade. 2. Preheat the grill to 400 degrees F. 3. After the grill has preheated, use a grill brush to brush off any leftover bits, then add chicken and cover with the grill lid. Allow to cook, undisturbed, for 6-7 minutes, then flip and cook on the other side for 6-7 minutes. If you have a meat thermometer, check to see that the internal temperature is 165 degrees. 4. Place cooked chicken on a serving plate and cover with foil; allow to rest 5 minutes before serving.
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Note from Julie: Grilled chicken is low in fat and calories; pair with one of these two side dishes below for a flavorful meal without many carbs. Add higher carb side dishes for those who want more carbs.

KETO CREAMED SPINACH

By Maya Krampf from www.WholesomeYum.com. [Link to recipe here](#).

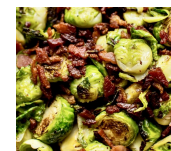


Makes: 4 servings, about ½ cup each

Per Serving: 273 calories, 5 g protein, 6 g carb (2 g fiber), 27 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 Tbsp butter • 4 cloves garlic, minced • 10 oz fresh baby spinach, chopped • 1/2 cup heavy cream • 3 oz cream cheese • 1 tsp Italian seasoning • 1/4 tsp sea salt • 1/4 tsp black pepper • Parmesan cheese, optional, for topping 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heat butter in a large saute pan or wok over medium heat. Add minced garlic and saute until fragrant. 2. Add spinach. Saute for 2-4 minutes, until wilted. If the pan is too full to stir at first, cover it for a minute or two, which will allow the spinach at the bottom to wilt. Then you can start to stir in a folding motion. 3. Add heavy cream, cream cheese, sea salt, black pepper and Italian seasoning. Stir constantly until the cream cheese melts, then cook a few minutes until thickened. 4. If desired, sprinkle with Parmesan cheese for serving.
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BRUSSELS SPROUTS WITH BACON



Serves 1 (To make more than one serving, just double or triple the ingredients)

Per Serving: 152 calories, 7 g protein, 8 g carb (3 g fiber), 11 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 1/2 slices bacon • 1 cup brussels sprouts, de-stemmed and cut into smaller wedges • 1/2 Tbsp bacon grease or butter 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. In a saute pan or skillet, cook the bacon over medium heat. Remove bacon after it is cooked and set aside to cool. 2. Drain grease and add 1/2 Tbsp butter to the pan. Turn heat to medium low. Add brussels sprouts to pan and cook, tossing them every couple minutes until tender, 12-15 minutes. 3. Once the bacon has cooled, crumble into small bits. 4. Add bacon to brussels sprouts as they finish cooking.
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BEST COBB SALAD

Consider this – or another salad that you enjoy – for dinner. Salads are pretty quick to throw together. And if you have previously cooked some protein, it’s easy to add to the salad. Also, try substituting in some MCT oil for added benefits. Salad dressing is a great way to do that!

BEST COBB SALAD

By Delish Editors @ www.delish.com. Link to original recipe [here](#).

Modified by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Note: Ingredients are listed for a **single serving** so you may assemble it neatly on your plate, knowing how much to cook/prep just for one. Adjust ingredient amounts as needed to make additional salads.

Serves: 1

Per Serving (salad only): 486 calories, 45 g protein, 12 g carb (6 g fiber), 29 g fat

Per Serving (w/dressing): 730 calories, 45 g protein, 12 g carb (6 g fiber), 56 g fat



<p><u>Salad Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 cups Romaine lettuce, washed & chopped ● 1 1/2 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled ● 1/4 medium avocado, sliced ● 5 cherry tomatoes, halved ● 1 boiled egg, quartered ● 3 oz cooked chicken, diced ● 1 ounce blue cheese, crumbled ● Sea salt and ground pepper, to taste <p><u>Dressing Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● 2 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil* ● 1 Tbsp red wine vinegar ● 1 tsp dijon mustard 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. For the chicken, you may use rotisserie chicken or cook your own. To bake in the oven, pat chicken dry, season with olive oil, salt and pepper, and bake in a 450 degree oven ~20 minutes. 2. Boil eggs (~10 minutes) and cook bacon. 3. Wash and dry the lettuce, then place on a dinner plate. 4. To a small bowl, add dressing ingredients and beat with a fork, then pour over the lettuce and toss. 5. Assemble salad from left to right as follows: egg quarters, tomato halves, diced chicken, avocado slices and crumbled bacon. Distribute blue cheese over the chicken. Add extra salt and pepper as desired.
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** For the dressing, consider substituting half the olive oil with **MCT oil**. Read why below. You also might consider not making an actual dressing, but simply drizzling about a tablespoon of MCT oil over the salad.*

What should I know about MCT oil?

- ❖ MCT stands for “medium chain triglycerides”. Don’t worry if you don’t know how to say that, just call it “MCT oil”.
- ❖ MCT is a special type of fat. The way we absorb it and use it is different from fats like olive oil or butter. This type of fat goes straight to the liver where it can immediately be burned for energy; and it can also be made into ketones. There are many other potential benefits too! You can read more about them in this Healthline article: [“7 Science-Based Benefits of MCT Oil.”](#)

How do I purchase MCT oil?

- ❖ There are many different brands available. The highest quality ones will have mostly C8 and C10 fats, and they will be a little more expensive.
- ❖ [This guide](#) from KetoConnect has great visuals and info to help you select the right one for you.



BAKED FISH WITH CREAM SAUCE (COD PICTURED HERE)

Adapted by Julie from author Nagi @ www.RecipeTinEats.com
Link to original recipe [here](#).



Makes 2 servings

Per serving (1 filet + 1/2 total sauce): 386 calories, 33 g protein, 3 g carb (0.5 g fiber), 27 g fat



<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (2) 150-180 g fish filets (5-6 oz/filet), any white fish, like cod • 3 Tbsp butter, organic preferred • 3 Tbsp heavy cream, organic preferred • 1-2 cloves garlic, minced • 1/2 Tbsp Dijon mustard • 1 Tbsp lemon juice • Sea salt and pepper • 1 Tbsp finely chopped shallots or scallions (white parts only) • Fresh parsley and lemon slices • Capers (optional) 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 400 degrees. 2. Prepare fish. If previously frozen, remove as much excess water as possible by gently but firmly pressing with paper towels. Removing excess water is important so the sauce isn't too thin. If the fish is fresh, just pat dry. Season on both sides with salt and pepper. 3. Into a large oven-safe skillet, add the butter, cream, garlic, mustard and lemon juice. Season with salt and pepper. Heat over medium, stirring to combine. 4. Place fish filets into the skillet with the sauce, and top with scallions or shallots. Bake for 10-12 minutes, until the fish is cooked (no longer transparent and flakes easily). Remove from the oven. 5. While the fish cooks, heat the cauliflower rice according to package directions. 6. To serve: Add 1 cup cauliflower rice (or alternative) to each plate, top with fish, then divide/spoon sauce over each serving. Note: the sauce may be thickened a bit by heating additional time on the stovetop after the fish is removed from the skillet. 6. Garnish w/chopped parsley, lemon slices and capers as desired.
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KALE WITH OLIVE OIL

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD

Makes 2 servings

Per serving: 74 calories, 1 g protein, 3 g carb (1 g fiber), 7 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 stems kale (60 g after stems removed) • 1 Tbsp extra virgin olive oil (or replace half with MCT oil) • Sea salt 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rinse kale and de-stem. 2. Add to a large skillet over medium heat. The water from rinsing it will help to steam it. Toss it around with a spatula to cook it, 2-3 minutes. 3. Add olive oil and salt, toss, then turn heat to low and cover with a lid. 4. Turn off heat and leave covered until ready to serve.
	<p>Optional: Add a squeeze of lemon juice.</p> <p>Optional for future recipes with sautéed veggies: Add a small amount of bone broth to the to provide additional flavor and nutrition.</p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px; margin-top: 10px;"> <p>To de-stem kale, grab a stalk of kale, hold it by the stem with one hand and place the pointer or middle finger and thumb of your other hand around the stem just above the leaves. Pull your fingers along the stem, tearing the leaves off. You can do this step right above the sink after you wash your kale leaves.</p> </div> 

Julie's Note: Serve the fish over any low-carb item you like; also try using cauliflower mashed potatoes.

LOW CARB Prepare fish as above. Serve with kale and olive oil or another low-carb side.

MORE CARB Add a serving of rice beneath the fish before topping with sauce and a side item.

CHEESY MEXICAN SKILLET BURRITO

Recipe adapted by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD from www.castironketo.com. Link to the original recipe is [here](#). This recipe is featured in the “Carb Swaps” PDF as well.



Makes 4 servings

Per serving without optional toppings: 479 calories, 44 g protein, 27 g carb (14 g fiber), 27 g fat.

Per serving with optional toppings: 592 calories, 45 g protein, 31 g carb (16 g fiber), 38 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tablespoon avocado or MCT oil • 1 pound ground beef, 85% lean • 1/2 white onion diced • 1/2 bell pepper diced • 1 4-oz can green chilis • 3 tablespoons taco seasoning • 2 roma tomatoes, seeded and diced • 12 ounces cauliflower rice • 1 cup shredded Mexican blend cheese <p>Toppings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 avocado diced or sliced • 1 jalapeño thinly sliced • 1/2 cup sour cream • 2 tablespoons cilantro minced 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heat the oil in a large cast iron skillet (or other skillet) over medium high heat. Once hot add in the beef and cook while crumbling with a wooden spoon until it starts to brown. 2. Add in the onion, bell pepper, and taco seasoning and cook for 3 minutes or until the onion and pepper starts to soften. 3. Stir in the green chiles and tomatoes along with the cauliflower rice. 4. Cook 5-7 minutes until most of the moisture has evaporated. 5. Sprinkle with cheese and cover just until melted, about 2 minutes. 6. For the original recipe: Top with desired toppings and serve. <p>For the “Cheesy Mexican Skillet Burrito” option: Place a low-carb tortilla* on each of 4 dinner plates, then divide the skillet ingredients over these; add desired toppings to the inside of the burrito, then fold edges over and serve.</p>
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*Examples of higher quality low-carb tortillas to use: [Xtreme Wellness!](#) or [La Banderita](#) (both made by Ole Mexican Foods).

Alternate ideas, using this same theme:

Chicken (instead of beef) + black beans and salsa	“Street Tacos” instead of a burrito	Street Taco sized low-carb tortillas	Taco Stands (example here)

Also try grilling the chicken before adding. Or sautee thinly cut steak. Use onions and peppers to make it more like a fajita. Be creative!!!

The higher carb version of this meal could include regular rice and/or regular tortillas. If you need to have both versions, divide the meat and veggie mixture into two separate skillets during step 3 above; then add the riced cauliflower to one and regular rice to the other.

LOW CARB MEATLOAF

By Lindsey @ www.thelittlepine.com. Link to recipe [here](#).



Makes: 6 servings

Per Serving: 534 calories, 48 g protein, 8 g carb (<1 g fiber), 33 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3 ounces tomato paste • 1/4 cup apple cider vinegar • 1-2 Tbsp erythritol, powdered • 1 tsp onion powder • 1 tsp garlic powder • 2 Tbsp olive or avocado oil • 1 medium onion, chopped • 4 cloves garlic, minced • 2 tsp salt, divided • 1 1/2 tsp black pepper, divided • 3 Tbsp Worcestershire sauce • 2 pounds 85% lean ground beef • 3 eggs • 1 1/4 cup mozzarella 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 350 degrees and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. 2. Mix the tomato paste, apple cider vinegar, erythritol, onion and garlic powder in a bowl; set aside. Alternatively you can use low carb ketchup. 3. Heat the oil in a pan and cook onion with 1 tsp of salt and ½ tsp of pepper over medium heat until softened, 5-10 minutes. Add garlic and cook for another 1-2 minutes, or until the garlic is fragrant. 4. Place cooked veggies into a large bowl and stir in Worcestershire. Add the ground beef, eggs, mozzarella and remaining salt and pepper, and combine thoroughly. 5. Form meatloaf on a prepared baking sheet by forming a 5" wide loaf with your hands. 6. Brush the ketchup over the top and bake in the oven for 1 hour or until a meat thermometer inserted into the center reads 155 degrees. It may take up to 1 hr 15 minutes to reach this temperature. 7. Allow the meatloaf to cool 15 minute before cleaning up the edges, and transfer to a serving plate. Brush additional ketchup over the top, if desired, before serving.
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Note from the author: Try making this in individual muffin tins for easy meal prep and portion control.

ROASTED BROCCOLI

Recipe by Jeanine and Jack at www.loveandlemons.com.

Link to the recipe is [here](#).



Makes: 4 servings

Per Serving: 151 calories, 5 g protein, 12 g carb (5 g fiber), 11 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8 cups broccoli florets • 3 Tbsp olive oil* • Sea salt and freshly ground black pepper • Meyer lemons, halved, optional • Red pepper flakes, optional <p>* Consider using 1-2 Tbsp MCT oil in place of olive oil.</p>	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. First, preheat the oven to 400 and line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper. 2. While the oven warms up, break a head of broccoli into evenly sized florets. Spread them on the baking sheet in a single layer. 3. Toss the broccoli florets with olive oil and season with salt and pepper. 4. Transfer them to the hot oven and bake for 15 to 22 minutes, until the florets are browned and crisp around the edges. <p>Author's Note: You can roast the lemon halves along with the broccoli. Right when they come out of the oven, squeeze the roasted lemon juice over the florets. Then, finish them with a big sprinkle of red pepper flakes. Serve warm, and enjoy!</p>
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Julie's Note: Lemons are a smart ingredient to incorporate into your meals. They help lower the glycemic (blood sugar) response to the meal. Add to your water with the meal or season your food with them. Limes are great for this purpose too! For this meal, I would prefer to add them to my water, not to the broccoli.



A higher carb version of this meal might include mashed potatoes. This is an easy meal to serve with multiple side dishes to accommodate everyone.

KETO CHEESEBURGER STROMBOLI

By Martina Slajerova @ www.ketodietapp.com/blog. Link to recipe [here](#).
Recipe revised by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD

Note: The original recipe called for 14.1 ounces ground beef. I revised this to 1 pound to streamline ingredient use. Also, this “dough” can be used in multiple ways. The author uses it for “hot pockets” as well.

Makes: 4 dinner servings or 8 appetizer servings

Per Dinner Serving: 573 calories, 50 g protein, 12 g carb (2 g fiber), 36 g fat



<p><u>Cheeseburger Filling Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 tbsp ghee or butter • 1 small yellow onion (70 grams) • 2 cloves garlic, minced • 16 oz ground beef, 93% lean • 1 tbsp dijon mustard • 2 tbsp tomato paste or sugar-free ketchup • 1/2 tsp sea salt • 1/4 tsp ground black pepper • 1/2 cup sliced sugar-free pickles • 4 slices provolone, Monterey Jack or cheddar cheese (4 oz total) <p><u>Dough Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1 1/2 cups shredded mozzarella (low moisture, part-skim, shredded) • 2/3 cup almond flour 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Heat a skillet greased with ghee or butter over medium high heat. Add chopped onion and cook for 3-5 minutes, until lightly browned and fragrant. Add minced garlic and cook for one more minute. 2. Add ground beef and cook until browned and opaque. 3. Add mustard and tomato paste, salt and pepper. Cook for about 5 minutes, stirring occasionally, and then take off the heat. 4. Preheat the oven to 360 degrees (fan assisted). Place the shredded mozzarella in a bowl and microwave for about 2 minutes, checking once or twice, or melt on the stove over a low heat. Mix in the almond flour. 5. Using a fork, combine well until you create dough. 6. Roll the dough out between 2 sheets of parchment paper until large enough to wrap around the filling (see pics on this link). 7. Using a slotted spoon, add the cooked cheeseburger meat mixture in the center of the dough (do not add any excess juices from the skillet). Add sliced pickles. 8. Top with cheese slices. Using a pizza cutter or a sharp knife, make cuts about 1 inch apart on the long sides of the dough. Do not cut all the way to the filling but just within about 1/2 inch of the filling. 9. Fold all of the strips of dough diagonally over filling, alternating from side to side, and stretching the dough as needed. 10. Place in the oven and bake for 18-20 minutes, or until golden brown on top. 11. Remove from the oven and let it cool down for 5 minutes before slicing. Eat immediately while still warm. To store, refrigerate for up to 4 days. Reheat before serving.
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SERVING SUGGESTION:

- Steamed broccoli or zucchini + a spritz of olive oil
- Side salad with vinaigrette dressing

These side items are both low-carb options; the point of this meal is to be low-carb. Those who don't want low-carb probably need a different meal. That said, if you can get others to try this, they just might be surprised at how tasty it is!!!

What's the difference between “keto” and “low carb”?

There is a great deal of overlap between these two concepts. Keto recipes tend to include more high-fat ingredients, in an attempt to produce more ketones (a form of energy and a signaling molecule). Low-carb is mostly about keeping the carbs as low as possible; recipes may not be as liberal with higher-fat ingredients. Either of these can be a favorable way to reduce insulin levels and promote weight loss. If you google “low carb stromboli” you will find recipes similar to the one above, but with some alternate ingredients.

JALAPENO POPPER CHICKEN CASSEROLE

By Kimber @ www.easyfamilyrecipes.com. Link to recipe [here](#).



Serves: 4

Per Serving (4): 652 calories, 66 g protein, 6 g carb (<1 g fiber), 40 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2 pounds chicken breasts, organic preferred (~4 total large breasts) • 1/2 tsp garlic powder • 8 oz cream cheese, softened • 5-6 fresh, whole jalapeno peppers • 4 oz sharp cheddar cheese, grated • 4 slices bacon, cooked and crumbled 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preheat the oven to 375 degrees. 2. Lay chicken breasts flat in a casserole dish (slice into thinner breasts first, if too thick). Season chicken with garlic powder, then spread softened cream cheese over them evenly. 3. Wash jalapeno peppers and cut off the tops. Remove the seeds and stems for a milder flavor, or leave some if you want more spice. Cut peppers into strips and lay them on top of the cream cheese, then sprinkle cheddar over the top. 4. Bake for 40 minutes. Remove from the oven, sprinkle with bacon, then return to the oven for another 5 minutes. Chicken is done when cooked through to an internal temp of 165 degrees.
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Julie's Note: This meal is higher in calories and contains plenty of satiating fat. It is best served with a lower carb side dish but can be served with other higher-carb options as well.

LOW CARB	<i>Serve with any steamed veggie you like; or try the sauteed spinach option below.</i>
MORE CARB	<i>Serve with a starchy item like rice or potatoes.</i>

SAUTEED SPINACH

Recipe by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD



Serves: 2

Per Serving: 67 calories, 2 g protein, 2.6 g carb (1.6 g fiber), 6 g fat

<p>Ingredients:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5 oz fresh spinach • 1 Tbsp butter • Sea salt and freshly ground pepper 	<p>Directions:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Rinse spinach under running water and drain. 2. Heat a large skillet over medium, add spinach, then turn down to medium low. Toss spinach continuously with a spatula. The water (from rinsing it) will help wilt it down within just a couple minutes. Add 1 Tbsp butter, cover with lid, and turn off heat. Allow to sit 1-2 minutes, then season with salt and pepper. 3. Divide into 2 portions. Add one portion to your plate.
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PALEO SAUSAGE AND SHRIMP GUMBO

By Louise Hendon @ www.PaleoFlourish.com. Link to recipe [here](#).

Recipe modified by Julie Cottrell, MS, RD, LD.



Serves: 6

Per Serving : 400 calories, 44 g protein, 17 g carb (4 g fiber), 18 g fat

<p><u>Ingredients:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4 Tbsp olive oil • 1 medium onion (120 g), peeled and finely chopped • 1 red bell pepper, diced • 1 green bell pepper, diced • 3 stalks of celery, thinly sliced • 1 cup fresh, sliced okra (optional) • 10 chicken sausage links, Cajun flavored, or 20 oz smoked sausage • 6 cloves garlic, finely chopped • 2 Tbsp Cajun seasoning (use 1 to 1 1/2 Tbsp if using Cajun-flavored sausage) • 2 cans diced tomatoes, undrained • 4 cups bone broth, chicken flavored • 2 pounds small to medium sized shrimp, peeled and deveined • Sea salt and pepper to taste • Chopped fresh parsley, to garnish 	<p><u>Directions:</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Add olive oil to a large pan over medium-high heat. Add the onion, bell pepper and celery to the pan and saute for a few minutes until vegetables are soft. 2. Add the sausage, garlic, and Cajun seasoning to the pan and continue to saute, stirring constantly to keep the garlic from burning, until the onion is caramelized. 3. Add the diced tomatoes and chicken broth to the pan. Increase the heat to high and bring to a boil. Then, reduce the heat to a simmer, partially cover with the lid, and continue to cook for one hour. Stir frequently to avoid the gumbo from sticking to the bottom of the pan. 4. Remove the lid and continue to cook, uncovered, stirring frequently, for 20 to 30 minutes until the broth is thick to your liking. 5. Add shrimp to the pan and cook for 3-5 minutes, until the shrimp are cooked through. Immediately remove the pan from the heat and season with salt and pepper to taste. Serve the gumbo in warm bowls and garnish with chopped fresh parsley.
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***Note from Julie:** I like to serve mine over a base of riced cauliflower. To the top I add diced avocado or sour cream (or both!). Also, because I use Bilinski's brand sausage links, I slice them lengthwise and cook on both sides in 2 Tbsp olive oil; remove from heat, allow to cool, then slice into half moons. I do this as a first step, before sauteeing the vegetables in the rest of the oil.

A higher carb version might include regular rice or perhaps some saltine-type crackers.